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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 FRB-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-07 TRSE-00
LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 PA-01 ICA-11 AGRE-00 ITC-01
/078 W
----------124352 261457Z /47
R 260956Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5122
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEBMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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FOR USEEC

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: EAID, ASEAN, ETRD, EEC
SUBJ: EC-ASEAN JOINT STUDY GROUP, MAY 18-19 BANGKOK

REF BRUSSELS 9441,

1. MFA OFFICER CONCERNED WITH ASEAN AFFAIRS GAVE EMBOFF RUN DOWN ON EC-ASEAN JONT STUDY GROUP MEETING AND EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE COOPERATION AND PROGRESS OF THE FOURTH SESSION TALKS. HE CONSIDERED THE ACHIEVEMENT SUFFICIENT JUSTIFICATION FOR SCHEDULING A MINISTERIAL MEETING IN NOV 78, TENTATIVELY SET FOR BRUSSELS.

2UNDER COMMERCIAL COOPERATION ITEM ON GSP, ASEAN PROPOSED DOZEN NEW PRODUCTS BUT LACK OF TIME PREVENTED ANY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION THIS SUBJECT. THE EC DID NOT ACCEPT ASEAN'S
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STABILIZATION PROPOSALS BUT OFFERED TO CONSIDER MATTER. ASEAN WILL RAISE STABEX AGAIN AT MINISTERIAL MEETING IN THE FALL. ASEAN EXPRESSED THEIR CONTINUING CONCERN OVER PROTECTIONISM AND, PARTICULARLY SOUGHT A RELAXATION OF EC TEXTILE QUOTAS ESTAB-LISHED IN DEC 77. THE EC REPORTEDLY SIAD THEY WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING TO FURTHER REDUCE QUOTAS WHICH MOLLIFIED ASEAN TO SOME EXTENT. THE EC RESPONDED TO ASEAN WORRY OVER STATISTICAL

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CONTROL ON SHOES TO THE EC AND DENIED THESE WERE A FIRST
STEP TO GREATER CONTROLS. THE EC ALSO ARGUED THAT THEIR
TARIFF SYSTEM WAS AMONG MOST LIBERAL IN THE WORLD AND THAT
ASEAN EXPORTS TO EC HAD TREBLED OVER PAST FIVE YEARS, ADD-
ING THAT ASEAN ENJOYED A TRADE SURPLUS OF APPROX
500 MILLION DOLLARS WITH EC IN THE LAST TWO YEARS. EC DEL
ASKED ASEAN TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE TO CONVINCE AFRICAN COUN-
TRIES TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE ON COMMON FUND AND URGED THAILAND
AND THE PHILIPPINES TO TAKE MEASURES TO ACCEDE TO GATT.

3. ASEAN WAS PLEASED WITH EC OFFIERS TO FINANCE TRADE FAIRS
IN THE FIVE COUNTRIES INCLUDING TRADE MISSIONS. BUYING
MISSIONS, TRADE PROMOTION SERVICES IN EUROPE, SEMINARS AND
THE PROVISION OF EXPERT ASSISTANCE.

4. DISCUSSIONS ON INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION LEADING TO A SECOND
INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE IN JAKARTA DURING 1979 WENT WELL. ASEAN
WAS ENCOURAGED WITH EC PLANS FOR POTENTIAL JOINT VENTURE PRO-
JECTS TO MEET EARLIER ASEAN PROPOSALS. SOME PROGRESS WAS MADE
IN TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY AND MANPOWER TRAINING PLANS WHICH
EC WILL FINANCE. IT APPEARED THAT EC DEL PROPOSED SIG-
NIFICANT FINANCING FOR PROJECTS INCLUDING RESEARCH ON PRE-
SERVATION OF FEED GRAINS, CROP STOCKPILING AND OTHER POST-
HARVEST TECHNOLOGY. STUDIES ON TOURIST FLOW TO ASEAN COUNTRIES
AND A SEMINAR FOR REGIONAL HOTEL EXECUTIVES WERE CONTEMPLATED
AND THE POSSIBILITY OF JONT VENTURE COOPERATION IN THE
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FIELD OF FISHERIES DISCUSSED. A REPORT FROM ASEAN THAT EC BUY
FOOD SUPPLIES FROM ASEAN MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR DISTRIBUTION
TO THIRD COUNTRIES WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE EC.

5. EC POST CONFERENCE DEBRIEFING WITH EMB EMB REPTS IN
BANGKOK CONFIRMED ABOVE. EC DEL DESCRIBED ASEAN GROUP AS
SERIOUS AND PRAGMATIC COMPARED TO SOME OF THE EC EN-
COUNTERS WITH THIRD WORLD. MINISTERIAL MEETING WAS NOT DIS-
CUSSED IN DEPT SINCE ASEAN WILL BE HARMONIZING THEIR POSITION
AT A FORTHCOMING MEETING IN PATTAYA IN JUNE. SUBSEQUENT
MEETINGS INCLUDING A FIFTH JOINT GROUP MEETING WILL DEVELOP
AGENDA FOR BRUSSELS MINISTERIAL.
WHITEHOUSE

NNN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, GENERALIZED PREFERENCES (TARIFFS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BANGKO15083
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780223-0123
Format: TEL
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780516/aaaaange.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a4683096-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BRUSSELS 9441
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2558153
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EC-ASEAN JOINT STUDY GROUP, MAY 18-19 BANGKOK
TAGS: EAID, ETRD, TH, ASEAN, EEC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a4683096-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014